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FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2315
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 0096
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ APR MADRID 0388
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO 4135
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 0876
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 000647

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/29/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [KDEM](#) [PHUM](#) [GT](#)
SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL POLL SHOWS CENTER-LEFT ALVARO COLOM
STILL IN LEAD

REF: A. GUATEMALA 384
[1](#)B. GUATEMALA 99
[1](#)C. GUATEMALA 96

Classified By: Amb. Derham for reasons 1.4(b),(d).

[1](#)1. (U) Summary: Presidential candidate Alvaro Colom of center-left Unidad Nacional de la Esperanza (UNE) retains the lead with 21.23 percent, 11 points over Partido Patriota (PP) candidate Otto Perez Molina, a proponent of "mano dura," according to a March 9-17 national poll conducted by Vox Latina. Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu, who has international name recognition but little political experience, stands in fourth place with 2.18 percent. However, with many Guatemalan voters still undecided, it remains unclear who will make it to the second round with Colom. End summary.

[1](#)2. (U) A March 9-17 nationwide poll conducted by Vox Latina shows center-left front-runner Alvaro Colom of the Unidad Nacional de la Esperanza (UNE) still in the lead with 21.23 percent, followed by Otto Perez Molina of Partido Patriota (PP) with 10.52 percent, and Alejandro Giammettei of Gana with 7.54 percent. Nobel Peace Prize winner and the first indigenous female presidential candidate Rigoberta Menchu, who officially announced her candidacy for Encuentro por Guatemala (EG) on February 21, is in fourth place with 2.18 percent. Trailing with less than 2 percent each are Luis Rabbe of FRG (1.59 percent), Harold Caballeros of Viva (1.39 percent), and Fritz Garcia-Gallont of Unionista (1.39 percent).

[1](#)3. (C) Comment: The entry of Menchu into the presidential race has had a notable impact; while she is not likely to win, she has been drawing votes from Colom's largely rural and indigenous support base, which could keep him from an outright victory in the first round. Although Colom remains the front-runner, it remains unclear who will make it to the second round with him as a large number of Guatemalans remain undecided.
Derham